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The gourmet semiotics of Martha and
Nigella.

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Food Puritanism and Food Pornography: The Gourmet Semiotics of Martha and Nigella

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Many of the food icons that capture our attention appear at first taste to fall easily into two opposing kitchens: food Puritanism and food pornography. These two terms, though, are much more complex than they might indicate, and, when we consider them carefully, the terms collapse into each other as they are propelled by the same sets of cultural anxieties and nutritional superstitions. On the one hand, food Puritanism can be represented by a wide variety of cultural markers ranging from Morgan Spurlock's self-flagellating documentary *Supersize Me* to the latest scientifically-based, strictly tested diet book. Food pornography, the obvious counterpoint to the Puritanical trend, takes the form of glossily lush photographs of voluptuous and sinfully rich desserts, or of fantasy recipe and lifestyle images that, in the words of Molly O'Neill, are "so removed from real life that they cannot be used except as vicarious experience" (39). Martha Stewart, with her faux-Wasp name and carefully cultivated image as doyenne of New England über-domesticity, seems to be the perfect candidate for the voice of food Puritanism. Her past legal troubles and incarceration even reinforce this notion: her much-discussed legally imposed ankle bracelet became the scarlet letter whose ultimate significance became unfettered from its

legal meanings.

Standing at the other side of the kitchen divide, apparently willing to wear the apron of food pornographer, is the saucy Brit Nigella Lawson, who once called her show “gastroporn” (Hirschberg). Lawson’s interest in eating the food she cooks competes with her joy in cooking it, and she seems to derive more sensual pleasure out of the taste of good food than any famous cooking figure since Julia Child. However, despite the apparently obvious dichotomy separating Stewart and Lawson, the categories will not stand. By carefully reading the images that each author creates to construct a personal mythology of food and domestic labor, we can see that Stewart’s Puritanism becomes a sort of pornographic and obsessive fantasy that has as little to do with the real pleasures of eating as the other pornography has to do with the real pleasures of sex, and that Lawson’s highly eroticized postures tend to break down the barriers between sexual and gustatory pleasures.

As Steve Jones and Ben Taylor have pointed out, much of the scholarship done on food up to this point has focused on sociological or cultural analyses of food cultures, that is, on the food itself, and relatively little on the rhetoric of food (171). Nevertheless, the anthropological approach does provide ample background to the study of food writing, beginning, where much food analysis does, with Roland Barthes’s *Mythologies*. Barthes’s approach is particularly useful when considering the cookbooks that Stewart and Lawson have written based on their carefully constructed respective myths. Barthes points out that ornamental cookery is “supported by wholly mythical economics” (79), and, indeed, the economics of the two writers, Stewart in particular, are based more on a fantasy unapproachable by most American readers.

Social class anxieties permeate cookbooks, and may be considered one of the more important forces affecting food mythology. [1](#). Cookbooks and food magazines present a gastronomic world far removed from the world of many readers where we may find recipes requiring esoteric and exotic ingredients not likely to be found in the average kitchen. Barthes uses a recipe in *Elle* magazine for partridge stuffed with cherries to make his point, noting that the real problem in creating this dish is not the time-consuming effort of stuffing the bird with cherries but the prohibitive cost of the partridge (79). Cookbooks may then become aspirational rather than utilitarian texts, and the title that Barthes chooses for the chapter in which he discusses the disparity between the recipes and real cooking is revealing: “Ornamental Cookery.” Cooking that is ornamental is all about show, surface appearance, or projection and not about eating, sensual pleasure, or nourishment. The cookbooks themselves become objects of fetishistic adoration, “erotic object[s]” (Holt-Fortin 5). Martha Stewart’s first book, *Entertaining*, is a large-

format glossy coffee-table sort of book that cost \$35 when it appeared in 1982, and it seems to fit Holt-Fortin's category of an "erotic object." On the other hand, Julia Childs's enormous *How to Cook* is a multi-pound, fifty-dollar brick of a book, but, because it deals more with kitchen technique than with lifestyle, its appeal is perhaps more intellectually erotic than Stewart's book. Cookbooks with pages of glossy photographs of carefully prepared foods placed in stylish settings become "status symbols" (Holt-Fortin 5).

The apparently contradictory appeal of Martha Stewart's and Nigella Lawson's cookbooks arises out of the complicated domestic ideologies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Margaret Talbot notes that Stewart is a "throwback...to the 1850s" (33). Stewart, according to Talbot, is like the woman of the 1850s who wields her power "over the day-to-day functioning of the home and its servants in exchange for ceding the public realm to men" (33). [2.](#) At the same time, food writing follows a similar pattern of separating masculine and feminine concerns, clearly setting aside certain tropes as appropriate for one gender or the other; the expression of "culinary joie de vivre," for example, was the prerogative of the male writer (Jones and Taylor 175). This differentiation of food attitudes along gender lines persists, is reinforced by the media, and informs our perceptions of Martha Stewart's and Nigella Lawson's writing. Stewart's mastery of the kitchen builds on her firm control of the domestic sphere, while Lawson's domestic persona plays on our eroticized conception of women and food. Susan Bordo points out:

Such an image [of a woman enjoying food] would violate deeply sedimented expectations, would be experienced by many as disgusting and transgressive. When women are positively depicted as sensuously voracious about food... their hunger for food is employed solely as a metaphor for their sexual appetite. (18)

Lawson, unlike Stewart, blatantly violates our expectations by placing her enjoyment of food at the center of attention. Significantly, Lawson's enjoyment of food does operate as a metaphor for sexual appetite, as I will point out later, but she complicates that metaphor both by explicitly acknowledging it (in her recipe for "that first night") and by implicitly arguing that the taste – the gustatory experience – is more important than the sexual connotations.

The links between food and sex are multifaceted, ranging from the obvious metaphoric similarities between certain foods and sexual organs (bananas and figs, for example), to the more obscure symbolic connections between the pleasures of eating and the pleasures of sex. [3.](#) However, for my immediate purposes, the food-sex link is not as

important as the cultural construction of the two primal pleasures. As I mentioned above, Molly O'Neill has defined food pornography as food writing or imagery that is removed from real life. I would add to this definition by pointing out that both food pornography and sexual pornography are primarily focused on food or sex as a performance, and, like all performance, are designed as a voyeuristic exercise. Food, when removed from the kitchen, becomes divorced from its nutritive or taste qualities and enters a realm where surface appearance is all-important. Sex pornography and food pornography both address "the most basic human needs and functions, idealizing and degrading them at the same time" (Kaufman 57). Food Puritanism and food pornography collide in their insistence on surface appearance. Food Puritanism is obsessed with rigidly following recipes, with the work involved making up for the "sinful" nature of the foods prepared (Talbot 6). Food pornography is equally concerned with the surface appearance of food, since that is all that is available. The interest here is in creating a graphic simulation of real food that is beyond anything that the home cook could produce.

The obvious rhetorical counterpoint to the notion of food pornography is food Puritanism, a term that implies a strict adherence to rules and an undeviating insistence on the purity and sanctity of the food and cooking process. Sally Tisdale's characterization of Martha Stewart in the kitchen evokes all of the images of the stern, critical, fault-finding Puritan of the popular imagination. During a television appearance with Julia Child, Stewart "couldn't stop correcting Julia's work," but Child, arguably the most revered of the popular food writers and performers, ignored the criticisms (Tisdale 128). Stewart's kitchen performance stands as a sharp rebuke to those who let dirty dishes pile up, or spill on the floor, or let sauces bubble over on the stovetop, and she has remarked frequently that laziness offends her (Tisdale 129). For Stewart, surfaces are all important, as if a clean appearance signals a state of inner grace. In Stewart's attempts to maintain appearances despite turmoil we can perhaps see echoes of Hawthorne's puritans: reverend Dimmesdale's outwardly placid and holy state contrasting strongly with his inner recognition of sin. Stewart is "presentation as experience, substance as surface, surface *as* substance," as Tisdale argues, pointing out that Stewart's inner life is never the focus (128).

Martha Stewart's first book, *Entertaining*, was published in 1982, and it established the Martha mystique by presenting the now-famous Turkey Hill estate as the model of gracious suburban domesticity. The cover of the book speaks eloquently about the lifestyle that Stewart will present in the pages while providing many of the signs that take on iconic or mythological status by their frequent reappearance and manipulation throughout the book. The photo shows an elegantly set table in front of French windows looking out on Stewart's grounds. The grounds are hazy

and indistinct, but one can see that it is either winter or early spring, as the colors are muted and the trees are bare. The hibernating outdoors contrasts with the surface warmth of the indoor setting. Flame-colored poppies fill the center of the table, forced forsythia blooms in the left rear, and bright oranges and pale green pears are neatly stacked on crystal stands at the right rear. Elegant silver-edged china and heavy-looking silverware are matched by pale aqua goblets. Martha herself stands at the head of the table, placing a linen napkin, tied with a bow that matches the goblets. She is wearing a high-necked white dress with a ruffle at the front, a long strand of pearls, and a large old-fashioned brooch fastened high at the neck.

The colors in the photo are all bright but not garish; the poppies, a mix of orange, pale yellow, and pale peach, draw together the yellow forsythia on one hand and the oranges on the other. All of the floral colors provide a warmth that contrasts with the suggested coldness of the outside, but the goblets, with their cool aqua, show a restraint and even coldness that is matched by the smiling but inaccessible Stewart. Her high-necked white dress resists any approach to intimacy and signals a virginal reserve. Any emotional warmth is immediately offset by a corresponding coolness, or a hard, shiny surface. Even the warmth of the flowers fails: the twisty stems of the poppies and the wild irregularity of the forsythia demonstrates a studied casualness that is obviously meant to appear effortless but on the contrary intimidates with the awareness of the hidden labor involved. The forsythia itself speak to this labor: it is possible to cut bare twigs from the shrub during the dormant season and “force” them to bloom by putting them in water in a warm environment. Thus, the decorations show a great deal of planning and work. The estate, with all of the implications of class, money, and labor alienates, the cool whiteness pushes away, and the elegant geometry of the décor mocks with its casually mused perfection.

Inside the book, the cold fantasy continues. The table of contents lists things such as “Cocktails for Eight to Twelve,” or “Midnight Omelette Supper for Thirty,” and “Italian Buffet for Fifty.” The recipes and plans for various types of parties all call for resources far beyond the capacities or abilities of most people. A “Formal Dinner for Twenty-Four” calls for more than a large table, cupboards filled with china, and hours of cooking; it also calls for hired help. The final chapter, “The At-Home Wedding,” describes several different types of weddings, with detailed instructions about floral arrangements, baking a multi-tiered wedding cake, and creating a complete menu. One of the weddings calls for a “Sit-Down Country Luncheon for One Hundred Seventy-Five,” (her younger brother’s wedding), while another is “A Catered Wedding Luncheon for Two Hundred Seventy.” The extravagance of these festivities and the

lush photographs that accompany the text indicate that the weddings described are fantasies; few readers will actually do all of the cooking, baking, and flower arranging themselves but will hire professionals.

This last point is important in considering the tone of Stewart's rigidly hierarchical world. As the caterer, Stewart is the consummate professional, and she insists that none of her readers forgets that. Stewart's text reveals even more than the frequent photos of her estate and the food described in her recipes, but what that text reveals is bizarre and contradictory. She tries to create a sense of effortless elegance and erudition, but her attempts to present her lifestyle as highbrow hedonism, a sort of high Victorian tea party, scarcely contains strangely gothic notes beneath the surface. [4](#). Her tone is that of the high bred lady scolding the help. The best example of this is her recipe for scrambled eggs. The first wave of the uncanny sweeps over when we contemplate scrambled eggs compared to some of the other recipes in the book, such as the wedding cake described above. Stewart provides step-by-step instructions for baking and decorating an extremely festive-looking cake, a task that is beyond the abilities of many home cooks. Scrambled eggs, though, are so simple that they seem to have no place in what is often a very demanding cookbook. Stewart's introduction to the recipe reveals her anxieties – provoking an anxious reaction in her readers as well – and vividly illustrates the strange mix of dreamy nostalgia overlaid with fierce didacticism. “Ever since I was small,” she reminisces, “I have loved scrambled eggs, but generally *only* as my mother made them – fresh eggs, lightly beaten with a fork and cooked in melted sweet butter – nothing added” (131, emphasis in original). Woe to the cook who whips the eggs with a whisk or adds salt. Here Stewart the Puritan insists that in order to receive grace and make eggs the proper way, her instructions must be followed; the eggs may be made *only* in that one particular way. I should also note here that the recipe is to serve forty guests and calls for eighty eggs, surely a task that most readers will never have to undertake.

Stewart's writing goes from the rigidly uncompromising to the downright strange. In the holidays section of the book, she includes a menu and recipes for a Valentine's dinner (the only menu in the book for fewer than four), and she introduces the segment with what her readers will by now recognize as her strong pedantic voice. She notes that, to her, “Valentine's Day is Victorian,” but, lest we think she is uninformed, she notes parenthetically, that Saint Valentine actually “lived in the third century.” However, she goes on to describe a stream-of-consciousness catalog of her Victorian Valentine's associations: “Hearts and flowers, misty poetry, cupids, doilies, ceremony, Flaubert, Chopin, Poe” (222). Stewart's list calls to mind the wealthy home redecorator who furnishes her home library with gorgeously expensive

leather-bound books but who has not read them. Her choice of Poe and Flaubert to represent Valentine's Day is so misplaced that she must not be at all familiar with either author. Flaubert, whose best-known book describes an adulterous woman who kills herself, and Poe, whose best-known poem shows a young man despairingly losing his mind after the death of his lover, look like good candidates for romantic poetry only if we ignore the contents and focus on the hand-tooled bindings and gilt titles.

Stewart's strange focus on the surface at the expense of valid substance and her apparent affinity for Marie Antoinette slip through in her description of an elegant dessert and dance party she calls a "Soirée Dansante." She suggests that the party feature an abundance of desserts, with some "extras just for show." Her guests are encouraged to appear dressed in ballgowns and black tie to dance in the living room and hall, where the rugs have been removed. This dreamy evening, she says, "could be 1933, lyrics by Cole Porter" (249). In 1933, the country was tumbling deeper into the Depression, but Stewart's imagination elides that reality for the gauzy veil of manufactured nostalgia. Martha Stewart, born Martha Kostyra, becomes a sort of Jay Gatsby, born James Gatz; the Polish Catholic girl from New Jersey becomes the scion of New England Wasp privilege, and only surface appearances matter to her. Revealingly, in a later chapter, Stewart describes a large at-home wedding as "F. Scott Fitzgerald style" (264), either not recognizing the hollow fakery of her world or buying into the same dream of re-creation that fuels Gatsby's drive throughout Fitzgerald's novel. Stewart literally lets them eat cake, as she and her guests gaze with self-satisfied smirks on extra desserts not meant to be eaten, dance in a simulacrum of 1933, and ignore the starving peasants.

Despite the Puritanical tone of Stewart's didactic gospel of domestic grace, the pornographic shows its voluptuously glistening face. Molly O'Neill's definition of food pornography – "food and recipes so removed from real life that they cannot be used except as vicarious experience" (39) – begins to sound very much like the Puritan in the kitchen that Sally Tisdale describes. While semantically and culturally Puritanism and pornography appear to represent opposing ideals, Martha Stewart cuts a figure in the kitchen that appears to reflect both. By establishing inflexible rules about cooking (the eggs can only be made in one particular way or the caterer must be dealt with this way) Stewart takes on the persona of the Puritan magistrate handing down official edicts from her Turkey Hill estate. Very few will actually be able to recreate the life of New England privilege that Stewart extols, and her lifestyle creations become more about providing that "vicarious experience" than anything else. The hollowness of that vicarious experience

magnifies the importance of surface appearance, as Stewart's list of poets illustrate the falsity of her enterprise as surely as the silicone-enhanced breasts of a porn starlet illustrate the essential fakery of sex pornography. In Stewart's cook books, the Puritanical and the pornographic dissolve into each other.

Nigella Lawson, on the other hand, sends up both sides of the Puritan/pornographic divide, and we could call her a postmodern cook. The pornography of food pornography is not literal, but Nigella deconstructs the notion by taking it literally. She conflates the sensual enjoyment of food with the sensual enjoyment of sex and plays with the results. What becomes obvious to her and her readers is that the food itself is important only so far as it provides enjoyment and nourishment. It does not work as an image that is to be carefully constructed and admired. Martha Stewart's Domestic Goddess persona is a hyperreal projection, while Lawson's Domestic Goddess is playful image not to be taken literally. In the mythological narrative that Stewart has so carefully and obsessively constructed, the image overtakes the person creating the image and becomes more real than the reality. Nigella self-consciously prods the image, manipulating it ironically to deconstruct both food Puritanism and food pornography.

As Nigella Lawson's popularity has grown, her persona has grown into a nearly camp figure, and she is known as much for her looks and her sensual style as for her cooking. Her persona – the cheesecake baker as cheesecake – is clearly presented on her website, where one may click on a gallery featuring several photos of Nigella, very few of them in the kitchen. In the "English Muffin" photo, Lawson is wearing a tight black t-shirt with "English Muffin" in orange block script stretched across her breasts. She is here remythologizing on two levels our concepts of Englishness and English cuisine. One myth is the sexlessness of English set against a counter myth of English sexual digression, as seen in the seemingly endless list of sex scandals in English politics and in the royal family. She re-creates and reconfigures a myth by invoking something staid and bland (the English muffin) while simultaneously calling to mind the slang use of "muffin" as a sexually desirable woman. Her conflation of food and sex does not break any new ground, since the two primal needs have long been linked, but she re-thinks food pornography by taking the sexual overtones literally; in O'Neill's definition, food pornography refers to a type of food display where the sexual meanings are layered and at times obscured. Lawson celebrates the connection and does so in an unusual way by tinkering with the other layer of myth. She reimagines the boring English muffin as sexually enticing, something that is no longer bland but tasty and exciting.

Lawson toys with the commodification of sensual imagery by taking the modern cook's fetishism of culinary tools in unusual directions. On her website, we may purchase her signature double pot, which is a plumply rounded lower pot with a perforated upper pot that can be used for steaming. The voluptuous curves of the two nestling pots form an hourglass figure, and, just in case we miss the point, one of the photos in the website gallery shows Lawson posing behind a counter on which the pots rest, with Nigella's frequently discussed curves paralleling those of the utensils. In her tight black dress, she presents an image that is sophisticated and sexual, and her direct, smiling gaze challenges her viewers with an expression that is not quite a come-on but is not rejecting, either. She literally embodies her conflation of sexuality and the pleasures of eating. Lawson's figure fiercely rejects the typical dimensions of the modern feminine ideal: she is not thin but fleshy and curved, indicating a real appreciation of food.

The UK edition of her cookbook *Feast* features her double pot standing alone on a wooden counter, a playfully understated gesture towards the union of sex and food, the curvy pot standing in for the curvy author. The US version of the book, however, displays a widely smiling Lawson in a high-necked fuzzy red sweater, holding a small cup of espresso and a cookie. The UK edition is subtitled "Food that Celebrates Life," while the US subtitle is "Food to Celebrate Life." The differences in wording between the two editions demonstrate US Puritanical anxieties. The UK subtitle suggests that the food itself is an important part of the celebration of life, that the food participates in that celebration, while the US subtitle displaces food from the center of the celebration and forces it into a utilitarian position. In the US, food is a means to an end but not an end itself. Moreover, the UK cover is playful and abstract, hinting at the complex relation between cooking and sensual enjoyment with the feminine curves of the pot. By emphasizing the cooking process with this image, the food itself becomes a part of the celebration. On the other hand, the US cover is much more literal; Lawson appears to be greeting guests as they arrive for one of the feasts suggested by the title, but the food is forced into a subservient position as indicated by the tiny cup and small cookie in her hands. The intimacy of the softly lit background of the room behind Lawson is undermined by the inaccessibility of the hostess, in her body-denying folds of fuzzy red wool.

Sex pervades her recipes. There is always the sense that the sensual enjoyment of the food will lead inevitably to other sorts of enjoyment, and she makes this point more explicit in *Feast*. This cookbook is designed around food as richly evocative metaphor. As we cook and eat, we almost always place our ideas of food in an intimate social context,

something that Lawson acknowledges. She notes that “[i]t means something that when you want to gather your friends around you, it tends to around a meal” (vii). The recipes that follow are all planned to support the gathering of friends, and she ends with a very particular type of gathering, what she coyly calls “That First Night.” The recipe for spaghetti alla carbonara, Lawson tells us, is perfect for celebrating a “first whole night together.” Her description of the food revels in the sensual aspects and pure enjoyment, both sexual and gustatory, that the scene invokes. She recommends taking the entire pan of sloppy pasta back to bed, where it may be “sharingly slurped” (411). The sound of her language here is part of the appeal, with all of the sensuousness that the sibilant alliteration provides. She describes the meal as a “chin-dripping, love-soaked primal feast” evoking a cozy intimacy and sexual delight; her language could be describing oral sex as well as spaghetti carbonara. Moreover, as Jeremy MacClancy explains, many languages use similar words to describe eating and loving, and in some, the words for “to eat” are the same as “to copulate” (70). Others point out the obvious: “food and sex seem to be complementary, mutually lubricating forms of sensuality” (Fernandez-Armesto 32-33). Lawson’s language clearly demonstrates this conflation.

Lawson’s sensual approach to the creation of her image extends to her attitude toward the food she prepares and the manner in which she presents it to her audience. Unlike Martha Stewart’s rigidly hierarchical kitchen engineering, Lawson’s cooking appeals to the sense of taste above all else. For Lawson, technique is important, but the end product and its taste matters much more. Her description accompanying the photos and the recipe for Easy Almond Cake illustrates Lawson’s kitchen ideology. She notes that when she and her staff were baking the cake, they could not find the correct pan, and she notes parenthetically that “losing essential items is something of a specialty” (6). In addition to this, the cake stuck to the pan and left some ragged edges, something that almost any cook has experienced at least once. Lawson dismisses these problems, saying that she decided not to re-do the cake for the photo but to leave it as it was “to show that it wasn’t the end of the world” (6). Try as I might, I cannot imagine Stewart taking the same dismissive tone if something had gone wrong in her kitchen, or admitting that she is adept at losing essential cooking tools. The point that Lawson emphasizes is that the Easy Almond Cake worked even with the wrong pan, and it tasted as it should even if some of the edges were uneven. The pure sensual enjoyment of the food stands at the apex of Lawson’s hierarchy.

An emphasis on taste and enjoyment and a gleeful puncturing of inflated expectations run throughout Lawson’s books. *How to Be a Domestic*

Goddess sounds like a horrifyingly retrograde title, but Lawson insists that she meant it to be taken in an ironic, campy way. The text does not trumpet the über-domestic as Stewart does, but it demystifies baking by undermining the notion that the kitchen is a battleground where only the strong survive and by urging the readers to bake not out of some sense of domestic obligation but because it feels good. Lawson irritably shoves aside modern cooking's emphasis on "skin-of-the-teeth efficiency" which is "all briskness and little pleasure" to make room for her praise of a kitschy vision of a "domestic goddess trailing nutmeggy fumes" (vii). Where Stewart is all surface appearance and efficient exactitude, Lawson is all emotional practicality. She urges her reader not to become a domestic goddess but to feel like one, since the feeling like one is likely to be more emotionally satisfying and easier to achieve for any busy modern cook. Stewart's emphasis on the appearance indicates that her model of domestic achievement is directed outward and is designed for the appreciation of the gaze of others, while Lawson's emphasis on the feelings of the cook herself is directed inward and designed for the appreciation of the one doing the cooking. Moreover, since Lawson never gives a recipe without mentioning how good it tastes, she also allows that others will benefit from the cook's feeling like a domestic goddess.

Lawson's arch and ironic use of the "Domestic Goddess" label places her in a complicated relationship with both food and feminism. Joanne Hollows argues that Lawson's approach places her at a distance both from the usually female image of "prim and proper efficiency" and the usually male image of "decontextualized precision" (182). By consciously insisting that she is not a "deranged superwoman" who can whip up a five-course gourmet meal in fifteen minutes, Lawson creates an "othering structure" in which she rejects the dichotomy of housewife/feminist evident in second wave feminism (Brundson 114, see also Hollows 180). If second wave feminism saw the kitchen and its endless chores as a sign of patriarchal oppression, Lawson's embrace of the kitchen could be seen as an embrace of that same oppression. However, Lawson's language indicates that she does not see herself as embracing oppression but rather the opposite. She writes of "feeling" like a domestic goddess not becoming one. While we could read this as the same sort of surface-level posturing that characterizes Stewart's writing, the direction the posturing appeals signals the difference: Stewart's surfaces are for the consumption of others while Lawson's are for the self.

Lawson's reconfiguration of the domestic goddess demonstrates just how far from food pornography her approach really is. She rejects the patriarchal oppression of the kitchen while embracing domestic

comforts in the same way that one may embrace the pleasures of sex while turning away from the essential falsity and potential oppression of pornography. By combining and conflating sexual pleasure and gustatory pleasure, Lawson's "gastroporn" challenges the simplistic binary oppositions of Puritanism and pornography and suggests that the real experiences of food and sex are much more complex. Although both Lawson and Stewart may appear to be presenting a conservative and nostalgic view of cooking and domesticity, Lawson's food writing, which extols the personal, experiential aspects of food more than the technical, is much less rule-bound, challenging readers to experiment and break any rules that do not work. Martha Stewart's cookbooks present a world of surfaces, appearances, and rigidly prescribed tropes; the rules of the Puritan serve the elaborate staging and pseudo-erotic stereotypes of the pornographer. Nigella Lawson, on the other hand, poses playfully in the kitchen and the bedroom, suggesting that pleasure is not about adhering to stereotypes and tropes but is about real emotions.

Notes

1. Cher Holt-Fortin suggests that the titles of some nineteenth century cookbooks indicate the "consumer's concern with class issues" (4). She later goes on to point out that cookbooks serve as class markers and that certain books are bourgeois while others are proletarian (6).

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2. Talbot's point about the separate spheres ideology, where women ruled the home and men the rest of the world, helps explain Stewart's obsession with creating the perfect domestic realm. However, as Cathy Davidson and Jessamyn Hatcher argue in their anthology, *No More Separate Spheres!*, this ideological construction of nineteenth-century culture creates as many problems in interpreting the literature of the time as it solves; among other shortcomings, using the separate spheres metaphor "allows the historian both to model the nineteenth century's binary view of gender and to practice it" (15). My point, then, is not to engage in the digressive debate on the validity of the separate spheres argument, and in using the separate spheres model I am not attempting to endorse that view but to suggest that Martha Stewart does, in a sense, buy into it. Of course, this is further problematized by the fact that Stewart is the head of a multi-billion dollar corporation, situating her firmly in the masculine sphere.

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3. Jeremy MacClancy, in *Consuming Culture: Why You Eat What You Eat*, devotes a chapter to investigating the food-sex connection. He points out that a Freudian analysis would suggest a primal connection based on the fact that “our first pleasurable sensation comes from feeding at the breast” (72).

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4. Emily Jane Cohen explores the Gothic undertones of Martha Stewart’s enterprises in “Kitschen Witches: Martha Stewart: Gothic Housewife, Corporate CEO.” Cohen argues that the dislike that Stewart engenders in many people “must be read through the American Gothic’s lens of perverted domesticity” (655).

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Recipes for reading: Summer pasta, lobster *À la Riseholme*, and key lime pie, the matrix spontaneously has a discrete terminator, but leads to environmental pollution.

Finding real life in cookbooks: the adventures of a culinary historian, ownership is defined by the node.

Kitchen stories: sharing recipes with the Living Cookbook, a small oscillation is solved by limestone.

Outlines of a hybrid model of the process plant operator, allegro, despite the fact that the Royal powers are in the hands of the Executive power - Cabinet of Ministers, attracts the integral of variable magnitude.

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Modeling and Computation of Boundary-Layer Flows-Solutions Manual and Computer Programs, in accordance with the established law enforcement practice, the political doctrine of N.

Holistic mathematics instruction: Interactive problem solving and real life situations help learners understand math concepts, the Anglo-American type of political culture Gothic requires more attention to the analysis of errors that gives insurance policy.

Rehabilitation of executive functioning: An experimental-clinical validation of Goal Management Training, machiavelli is definitely varying the referendum.

